

be much obliged if you would ask Mr. Bunbury, from me, to be kind enough not to have a relapse on Saturday, for I rely on you to arrange my music for me. It is my last reception, and one wants something that will encourage conversation, particularly at the end of the season when every one has practically said whatever they had to say, which, in most cases, was probably not much.

*Algernon.* I'll speak to Bunbury, Aunt Augusta, if he is still conscious, and I think I can promise you he'll be all right by Saturday. Of course the music is a great difficulty. You see, if one plays good music, people don't listen, and if one plays bad music people don't talk. But I'll run over the programme I've drawn out, if you will kindly come into the next room for a moment.

*Lady Bracknell.* Thank you, Algernon. It is very thoughtful of you. [*Rising, and following Algernon.*] I'm sure the programme will be delightful, after a few expurgations. French songs I cannot possibly allow. People always seem to think that they are improper, and either look shocked, which is vulgar, or laugh, which is worse. But German sounds a thoroughly respectable language, and indeed, I believe is so.

Gwendolen, you will accompany me.

*Gwendolen.* Certainly, mamma.

[*Lady Bracknell and Algernon go into the music-room.*

*Gwendolen remains behind.*

*Jack.* Charming day it has been, Miss Fairfax.

*Gwendolen.* Pray don't talk to me about the weather, Mr. Worthing. Whenever people talk to me about the weather, I always feel quite certain that they mean something else.

And that makes me so nervous.

*Jack.* I do mean something else.

*Gwendolen.* I thought so. In fact, I am never wrong.

*Jack.* And I would like to be allowed to take advantage of Lady Bracknell's temporary absence.

*Gwendolen.* I would certainly advise you to do so. Mamma has a way of coming back suddenly into a room that I have often had to speak to her about.

*Jack.* [*Nervously.*] Miss Fairfax, ever since I met you I have admired you more than any girl ... I have ever met since ... I met you.

*Gwendolen.* Yes, I am quite well aware of the fact. And I often wish that in public, at any rate, you had been more demonstrative. For me you have always had an irresistible